

Enter: A Wine Colored Gown

By RITA KELLEY

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The train was thirty minutes from Padmore when Miss Rand set up straight and began pulling the pins out of her hat, a pretty wine colored affair that exactly matched her traveling gown. Five minutes later in a tan rain coat and cap she splashed down into the pools of water on the open platform of the railway station and faced the glaring eyes of the hansom cab transfer wagons and a private brougham or two lined up opposite. She paused under a lamp midway of the line and looked expectantly. Only a brougham and a cab remained when Miss Rand gathered up her skirts and started down the platform. A coachman in green livery was guiding a young woman in a wine colored gown to the brougham. Miss Rand was hurrying toward the coachman when voice drawing from the cab at her right made her stop short.

"Hello, Kate!" it said. "What in time are you doing here?"

"Well, Tommy Yates," she laughed, offering her hand, "isn't this funny?"

"Yes, isn't it?" he said, holding fast to the hand. "Don't you know enough to come in out of the rain?"

The next moment she was settling herself on the dry cushions.

"I've been standing out there hours waiting for some one to claim me," she said as the door banged shut and the cab started off. "And you sitting here all the time! Cruel! What were you doing anyway?"

"Looking for a girl very much like you," Tommy turned and gazed at her. The damp air had made little blond ringlets about her face. "You are just as pretty as ever, Kate." He leaned over and looked closer. "Yes, even prettier," he added.

"Non sense!" she said, blushing as the cab passed under an arc light. "You're just as silly as ever, Tommy. You'll never get over that."

"What?" asked Tommy shortly.

"Silliness."

"I thought I had," said Tommy shortly. "But somehow I think I never will, either." Something in his voice made her turn and look at him.

"I am going to Brettons'," she said after a silence. "I think it is 538 Grant. If the coachman did get the wrong girl I couldn't stand out in the rain another minute. You see, I was to be identified by my wine colored dress, but it rained so hard I put on this coat. I wasn't going to have the gown spoiled."

"Ah-h" Tommy actually hugged himself. He made the cabby stop at Martin's. "How long has it been since I saw you, Kate?"

"You have forgotten?"

"No. I just wanted to see if you remembered. Four years since you jilted me."

The cab had stopped, and Tommy was out in the streaming light of the cafe, ready to assist her. She sank back on the seat.

"Oh, oh!" she protested. "I forgot. I was to be at the Brettons for dinner. They'll be expecting me."

"Oh, pshaw! Here I was delegated to look after a girl in a wine colored frock, and now she disapproves of my scheme of entertainment!"

"Oh," said Kate, climbing out. "Is that it? I thought you were simply a convenience."

"Now, see here!"—Tommy tucked her under the umbrella—"I'm not a kid any more. I'm assistant cashier of the bank."

They were eating their soup, when Kate straightened back in her chair.

"Tommy Yates," she exclaimed, "it was the other girl you were looking for!"

"What other girl?"

"Why, the other girl in the wine colored dress! The coachman was taking her to the carriage when you stopped me."

"Well, let him take her. You didn't see me looking for her very hard, did you?"

"Tommy Yates!" Kate leaned over the table, chin in hand. "Do you mean to say this is one of your little games?"

"Game?" Tommy was leaning over the table too. "I never was so serious in my life."

"I'm going."

"Going? What do you mean? Please don't!"

"But, you see, it is this way," she explained. "I don't know the Brettons. I never saw them. They're friends of my mother's just moved here, and it was arranged by the two families that I was to visit them. It seems there is a young man in whom I'm expected to find a congenial life partner."

"He's a nice sort," commented Tommy.

"You know him, then? Why, Tommy, it isn't—it can't be you!"

Tommy smiled complacently.

"We'll go up after dinner and find out," he said.

"Why, no," she laughed embarrassedly, "of course—how silly of me! They said his name was Frank. Such an ugly name! But, Tommy"—she looked up suddenly from her salad—"who was the girl in the wine colored dress?"

"That," said Tommy, "is rather difficult to explain. Would it simplify matters any if I told you she is the one who is to carry off the friend of the Brettons?"

"And how about the friend?"

"Well!"—Tommy looked at his watch.

"She has an hour and a half the start of you."

"No time to gain,"—he said.

cried. "Do you think for a minute, Tommy Yates, that I'm going to let another girl do me out? No, sir. He's mine."

"Do you really think that much of a fellow you never have seen?" asked Tommy anxiously.

"Want him! Who said I wanted him? I wouldn't take him as a gift! But if you think I am going to let another girl take him before he's even seen me you're mistaken. She's up there now, and they think she's me—I am she."

"You are right. She's having the time of her life."

"See here, Tommy Yates, you explain this mystery. Why did you let me stand out there soaking up the rain?"

Tommy's eyes blinked.

"I couldn't really believe my eyes that you were."

"You came down to get that girl in the wine colored dress," said Kate acusingly.

"So I did." Tommy was staring hard at her wine colored blouse. "I got her."

Kate pushed back her plate, clasped her hands on the table and looked at him.

"Explain yourself," she said.

"Happy."

"Well, why don't you begin?"

"Are you going to stay until I am through?"

"Till the crack of doom."

"Very well, then. I was going to marry that girl."

"Tommy Yates?"

"Isn't it permissible to marry?"

"And you sat there, high and dry, without ever offering to get out and find her! Tommy Yates, you're a beast!"

Tommy pulled out a box of cigarettes and flourished it. "With your permission," he said. She did not deign to answer him. He lighted one regardless.

"I decided one minute after the train pulled in that I wasn't going to marry her after all."

"And you ran back and hid your head in the cab to prevent her seeing you, I suppose?"

"I didn't get out."

"Baby! You were afraid you would get your feet wet?"

Tommy blew a wreath of smoke over the carafe.

"I was trying to figure how I was to get you into the cab and keep her out."

"Tommy?" Kate's eyes had widened.

"Did you love that girl?"

Tommy shook his head.

"Then why did you ever think of marrying her?"

Tommy made an inventory of the pretty girl before him—pink and white, blue, gold-cheeks, eyes, hair.

"She looked like you," he said shortly.

"Tommy, you don't care yet?"

"Yes, I do."

"But you were so mean to the other girl."

"She won't care. She likes money. I haven't got nearly so much as that friend of the Brettons."

"I never thought, Tommy, that you'd amount to much."

"I'm assistant cashier. I guess that's something."

"Yes, something."

"And father said I'd get to be the whole works if I settled down and married. Will you?"

"What?"

"Marry me?"

"Or the money?"

"Either."

"Well, I guess I'll take you."

A "Fly" Undergraduate.

A prominent railway official tells how an undergraduate at Johns Hopkins university made a decided hit at a banquet of railway men in Baltimore, to which he had been invited because of his intimacy with the son of the president of a certain road.

As there were not many guests the toastmaster called upon all for speeches. When the older men had had their say the toastmaster, turning to the young student, smilingly suggested that he make a short talk. The guests looked sympathetically at the young fellow, but he arose with perfect self-possession and said:

"Gentlemen, my position just now reminds me of a story."

"A fly got on the ear of a bull. For some reason entirely unknown to the fly the bull suddenly began to tear down the road at a terrific rate, leaving a suffocating trail of dust. He was snorting and roaring in a most ferocious manner when the fly whispered in the bull's ear:

"Gee! Ain't we raising an awful lot of dust and noise?"

"And, gentlemen," added the undergraduate, "I must say that in the midst of all this wit and eloquence tonight I feel very much like that fly."

How It Struck Joe.

Joe was the name of a servant employed for many years by Clarence King, the eminent geologist. Joe's life was evidently in his work, and he judged of all things in the world by their relations to it. In "King's Memoirs" this anecdote of Joe's point of view is given:

At a gentleman's country seat, with good servants' accommodations, ample facilities for blacking boots and brushing clothing, well trimmed lawns and genteel society, Joe was in paradise, but experience in the muddy or dusty wilderness half paralyzed his usefulness and wholly quenched his enjoyment.

On one occasion, attended by this man only, King made his way to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado and stood for a time dumb upon its brink, overwhelmed by the vastness and the glory of the scene. At last it seemed to him that he must speak, and as he turned away he said:

"And how about the friend?"

"Well!"—Tommy looked at his watch.

"She has an hour and a half the start of you."

"No time to gain,"—he said.

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Office and Residence:

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Office Hours: 8 to 9:30 A. M., 8 to 8 P. M.

Telephone No. 107-a—Bloomfield.

C. H. HALFPENNY,

ATTORNEY & COUNSELLOR AT LAW,

Office: 800 BROAD STREET, NEWARK.

Residence, Lawrence Street, Bloomfield

SAMUEL W. BOARDMAN, JR.

ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW.

Special Master in Chancery.

NEWARK, N. J. BLOOMFIELD, N. J.

Prudential Building. 17 Washington Place.

Frederick H. Pilch Henry G. Pilch.

PILCH & PILCH,

Attorneys and Counsellors at Law.

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Residence of F. R. Pilch, 78 Water Street, Newark.

HALSEY M. BARRETT,

ATTORNEY AND COUNSELLOR AT LAW.

Office, 750 Broad St., Newark.

Residence, Elm St., Bloomfield.

CHARLES F. KOCHER,

COUNSELLOR AT LAW

NEWARK: BLOOMFIELD:

Prudential Building. 285 Bloomfield Avenue.

W. M. DOUGLAS MOORE

Attorney and Counsellor at Law.

OFFICE:

149 Broadway, New York City.

Residence, 12 Austin Place, Bloomfield, N. J.

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